



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY TRAINING AND DOCTRINE COMMAND**  
**102 MCNAIR DRIVE**  
**FORT MONROE VIRGINIA 23651-1047**

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

ATBO-Z

**5 AUG 2003**

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Increased Suicide Prevention Awareness

1. The summer and early fall months are the time of year when nearly 50 percent of our calendar year suicides occur. Although there are no clear explanations for this increase, certain facts are consistent.

2. Summer brings increased alcohol consumption. Of past suicide victims, 50 percent were drinking within 3 hours of their deaths. External influences such as increased operating tempo, deployments, and uncertainty have placed added stress on soldiers and their families. Most individuals adapt, but a few have not developed strong problem-solving skills and see only a dismal, hopeless, and unbearable future.

3. We must not become complacent with our suicide prevention efforts. Consider the following actions:

a. Increase the number of Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) classes for supervisors and drill instructors. Contact post chaplains for the new human interaction suicide intervention counseling compact disc (CD) developed by Johns Hopkins University for refresher training for those who have had the 2-day workshop. The three CD set allows individuals to practice and refine their individual counseling techniques through a computer program by utilizing a simulated soldier in a safe, risk-free environment.

b. Publish newspaper articles, cable network announcements, and items in other media to educate the public on mental illness and depression. Emphasize TRADOC's policy that seeking help is a sign of strength.

c. Use Installation Prevention Teams to discuss installation or community behavioral programs to support the development of life-coping skills.

d. Ensure as part of the requirements for Deployment Cycle Support, that both the soldier and family members attend ASIST.

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Leaders additionally need to be alert to families that have had particular problems during the deployment.

4. Caring and proactive leadership can make a difference.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ANTHONY R. JONES  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army  
Deputy Commanding General/  
Chief of Staff

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